(b) if so, the reasons for restricting such highway projects only to one system of Build, Operate and Transfer;

(c) whether other options have also been explored;

(d) whether it is a fact that under the BOT system contractors or project owners are over-charging users indiscriminately; and

(e) the steps proposed to ensure that road users are not exploited under the BOT system?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (SHRI K.H. MUNIYAPPA): (a) Government has decided to take up all future works of NHDP, as far as possible, mainly on BOT basis with viability gap funding support as per policy. However in certain exceptional cases, some works may be taken up with fuller funding support by the Government in public interest.

(b) and (c) Government has decided on BOT system after considering other systems adopted in NHDP Phase I & II and also considering the advantages of BOT systems, viz, higher quality of construction and maintenance of roads and completion of projects without cost and time overrun, etc.

(d) No, Sir.

(e) Does not arise.

Vehicles running in the country

4618. SHRI RAJU PARMAR: Will the Minister of SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the total number of vehicles operating in the country as on 31st October, 2004;

(b) whether the road space available to accommodate the vehicles in the country is inadequate and is unlikely to go up in the near future; and

(c) if so, the steps that are being taken by Government to increase the road space during the next five years?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (SHRI K.H. MUNIYAPPA). (a) The total number of registered motor vehicles in the country, as per latest information available from the State Governments/UTs was 5.85 crores, as on 31st March, 2002.

(b) and (c) The Union Government is responsible for development and maintenance of National Highways. There are capacity constraints in some of the National Highways. Steps have been taken for widening of existing National Highways to 4/6-lanes under National Highways Development Project (NHDP), in a phased manner. Further, the widening and construction of paved shoulders on National Highways, not covered under NHDP, is also taken up on selected stretches, depending upon priority of work and overall availability of funds.

National Highways in States

4019. SHRI DARA SINGH CHAUHAN: Will the Minister of SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the details of guidelines fixed for construction of National Highways by Government;

(b) whether it is a fact that Government have recently approved the various proposals for construction of National Highways in the country;

(c) if so, the details thereof;

(d) the details of amount sanctioned for Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Himachal Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Uttaranchal, Jharkhand and Chhattisgarh for construction of NHs;

(e) whether Government have received any proposal from the above States for construction of National Highways; and

(f) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (SHRI K.H. MUNIYAPPA): (a) Presumably Hon'ble Member wants to know about criteria for declaration of new National Highways. The criteria for declaration of National Highways is given in Statement - I (*See* below).